

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I'm writing to urge you to support the proposed merger between Hughes Electronics and EchoStar Communications. I believe the merger holds tremendous potential for my company in Bayonne, NJ which sells the DIRECTV satellite TV service. The new company will offer a more attractive product to consumers, and this will mean more business for my company.

The majority of my customers are able to subscribe to their local broadcast channels via satellite, but some of those who live in smaller television markets cannot. Currently, DIRECTV offers local broadcast service in only 43 television markets. If the merger is approved, DIRECTV and DISH Network can more efficiently use their limited channel capacity and offer local service via satellite in all 210 television markets nationwide. The ability to offer local broadcast channels to all of my customers makes selling the product easier and gives customers more choices among satellite and cable providers in the near future.

None of my customers currently have broadband access to the Internet via cable modem or DSL service, but it is clearly something that many of them want given the number of times I have heard them ask about it. If the merger is approved, the new company will be able to provide the homes and businesses in my area affordable high-speed Internet access service. My customers will benefit from this merger because HUGHES and EchoStar can combine their resources, satellites, and spectrum to provide high-speed satellite Internet access service to areas not otherwise served by cable modem service or DSL.

My customers chose satellite TV over cable because of its superior customer service, better quality picture and sound, and the abundance of channel options. However, cable companies now offer digital cable in millions of homes. This has negated the past advantages of satellite over cable TV and has begun to hurt DIRECTV's and EchoStar's ability to compete. The new company will have the resources, spectrum and satellites necessary to offer a competitive satellite TV product while improving customer service and keeping cable prices in check.

The new company has also pledged to offer new and enhanced services like interactive television and near video-on-demand. These products will allow satellite TV to go head-to-head in competition with cable companies and other competitors as they improve their technological capabilities.

Please support the merger between HUGHES and EchoStar. There are many benefits of the merger, but I believe that most importantly, the new company will increase competition with cable and help hold down cable rate increases. These savings, in turn, will be passed along to customers, which will be good for my business.

Sincerely,

Mina Boutros
783 Broadway
Bayonne, NJ 07002